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Message Text

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42
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 NEA-14 ISO-00 ACDA-19 OMB-01

TRSE-00 NIC-01 SAM-01 SAJ-01 EB-11 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 DRC-01 /189 W
---------- 090959
R 091320Z MAY 74
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9562
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES
AMCONSUL LUANDA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USCINCEUR
CINCLANT
DIA
COMUSFORAZ
USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS LISBON 1848

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PO
SUBJ: MARIO SOARES EXPRESSES CONCERN AT PROLIFERATION
OF POLITICAL PARTIES

REF: LISBON 1815

SUMMARY: IN PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 7 SOCIALIST PARTY
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(PSP) CHIEF MARIO SOARES OUTLINED HIS VISION OF POLITICAL ROLE

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PSP IN COMING MONTHS. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN AT PROLIFERATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, SAID "FAR LEFT" HAS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN NATIONAL POLITICAL LIFE, AND DISCUSSED HIS RECENT EUROPEAN SWING. PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF PRESS CONFERENCE SEEMS TO BE GENUINE PSP CONCERN AT BEING ECLIPSED BY PCP OR DILUTED BY OTHER "SOCIALIST" PARTIES, AND CONCURRENT DESIRE FIX PSP IN PUBLIC MIND AS NATURAL RALLYING POINT FOR "DEMOCRATS". END SUMMARY.

1. SOCIALIST LEADER MARIO SOARES HELD THREE-HOUR PRESS CONFERENCE
MAY 7, WITH PARTICIPATION OF NUMBER IDEOLOGICAL COLLEAGUES, INCLUDING LUAR CHIEF PALMA INACIO. DURING CONFERENCE SOARES EXPRESSED CONCERN AT PROLIFERATION OF POLITICAL GROUPS IN PORTUGAL, SAYING 53 NOW EXIST, BUT NOTED PSP SUPPORTS POLITICAL PLURALISM. CRITICISM DIRECTED AT OPPORTUNISTS NOW FORMING NEW GROUPS (REFTEL), MANY OF WHICH USURP "'SOCIALIST' LABEL IN "VAIN HOPE" OF PARTICIPATING IN NATIONAL POLITICAL LIFE.

2. PSP, ASSERTED SOARES, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS MOST LEFTIST NON-COMMUNIST PARTY IN PRESENT LINE-UP. SOARES GUARANTEED "SOCIALIST LEFT" PLACE WITHIN PSP, AND SAID PARTY WILL "FRATERNALLY DIALOGUE" WITH PCP, WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS FIRMLY ROOTED AMONG WORKING CLASS. SOARES MAINTAINED THAT SUPPORT FOR THREE GREAT POLITICAL CURRENTS (PCP, PSP, AND "A CENTER PARTY") EXISTS IN PORTUGAL. THESE CURRENT SHOULD ORGANIZE INTO WELL DEFINED PARTIES SO PEOPLE CAN KNOW WHO IS WHO AND WHAT THE ISSUES ARE.

3. REGARDING LABOR MOVEMENT, SOARES MAINTAINED IT SHOULD UNIFY ITSELF, BUT SHOULD REMAIN ALOOF FROM POLITICAL PARTIES AND PREVENT POLITICAL PENETRATION. (HOWEVER, SOARES EARLIER CLAIMED PSP MUST BE THE PARTY OF WORKING CLASS. SEE COMMENT).

4. NATIONAL UNITY, ASSERTED SOARES, REQUIRES THAT PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF FORCES FROM FAR LEFT TO CENTER. FAR LEFT HAS ITS ROLE TO PLAY,
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AND SHOULD BE CONSULTED. BUT THREE PRINCIPAL CURRENTS SHOULD BE GIVEN BULK PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. PSP WILL NOT ACCEPT, HOWEVER, NAMING OF ANY FORMER "LEADER" OF PREVIOUS REGIME TO PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT.

5. SOARES ENDED PRESS CONFERENCE WITH DETAILED ACCOUNT HIS RECENT EUROPEAN SWING AS PSP LEADER, AND SAID IT BROUGHT POSITIVE RSULTS FOR COUNTRY. ALSO LAUDED ROLE

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PSP IN UPGRADING INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE AND GOOD NAME
PORTUGAL, AND TOOK BACKHAND SWIPE AT PCP BY NOTING
SOCIALISTS, NOT PCP, WERE ONES TO BRING BACK NEWS THAT
USSR SEEKING ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH PORTUGAL.

6. COMMENT: FEAR THAT PSP WILL BE LOST SIGHT OF AMONG
PROLIFERATING "SOCIALIST" PARTIES AND WELL-ENTRENCHED
PCP IS PROBABLY UNDERLYING REASON FOR SOARES CALLING
PRESS CONFERENCE. MAIN THEME ADVANCED BY SOARES WAS
THAT PSP "IS FOCAL POINT FOR ALL DEMOCRATIC FORCES".
EFFORTS TO ENHANCE HIS IMAGE AND ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE
PUBLIC OF PSP'S WORTH LED SOARES MAKE NUMBER CONTRADICTORY
AND OFTEN CONFUSING STATEMENTS REGARDING PSP RELATIONS
WITH FAR LEFT. LABLR, ETC. SOARES CONCERN AT PARTY
PROLIFERATION APPEARS GENUINE, IF ONLY BECAUSE PSP
TASK IN RALLYING BROAD SUPPORT WILL BE PROPORTIONALLY
MORE DIFFICULT AS MORE PARTIES SPRING UP.
SCOTT

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